Setting up of Beryllium Plant in Mumbai

3019. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMAD KHAN (DURRU): Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a few years back a Beryllium Plant was set up at Vashi Complex, Navi Mumbai;

(b) if so, whether any study was conducted so as to ascertain the viability of the plant;

(c) if so, the details in this regard.

(d) the present status of the said plant;

(e) whether Government propose to shut down the said plant being non-viable;

(f) if so, by when; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir. The Beryllium Pilot Plant was set up at Vashi Complex, Navi Mumbai in 1982.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Plant was set up for demonstrating the technical viability for producing vacuum hot pressed beryllium blocks, intricate shapes of beryllium components and sintered beryllium oxide. The productions of beryllium materials are entirely for meeting the requirements of the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and the Department of Space (DoS) and are not marketed on a commercial basis. Beryllium is a strategic material and is not exported.

(d) The Plant is regularly producing beryllium materials to meet the requirements for critical nuclear physics experiments and components required by DoS.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

(g) The plant is expected to play a leading role to meet the beryllium requirement of some of the future reactors to be set up by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre.